

BUNCOM HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2005



BUNCOM'S BACK ON THE OFFICIAL OREGON STATE MAP

After an absence of many, many years, Buncom is back on Oregon's official state map.

Every two years, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) updates the official map that is distributed to visitor centers, chambers of commerce and other public sites around the state. In the 2005-2007 version, just released, Buncom is shown as a "locale or site," along with Ruch and Provolt in the Applegate Valley. (Applegate, Williams and Murphy show up as "unincorporated places.")

So how did the change happen? Four years ago, Society President Reeve Hennion began corresponding with ODOT to see

what was involved in adding Buncom. The map includes a number of other ghost towns in the state. However, despite his efforts our favorite

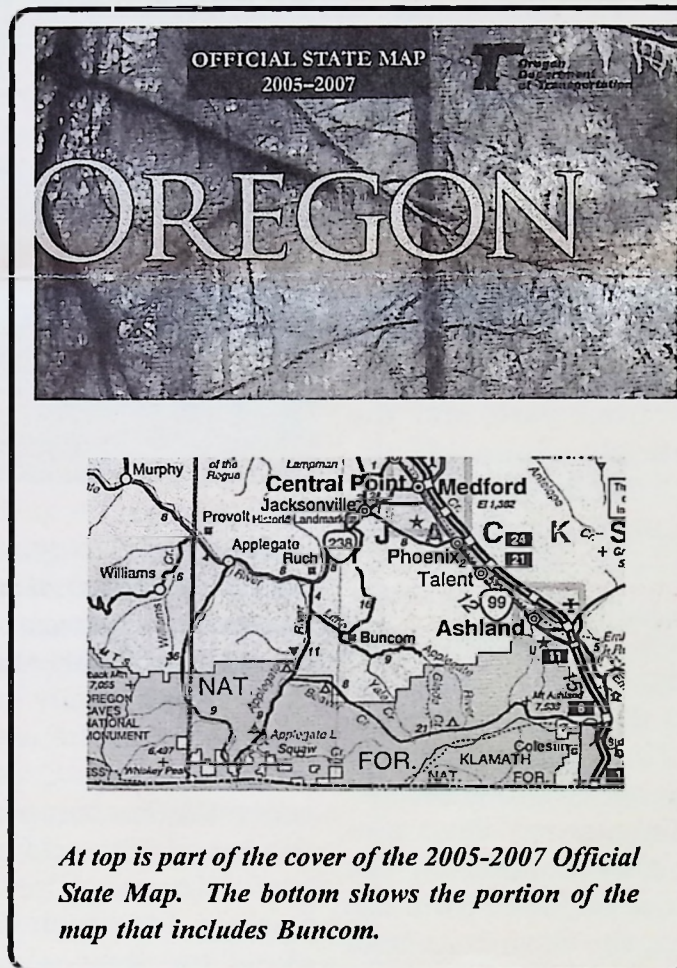
town was not included on the 2003-2005 map.

This time around, he enlisted the help of other groups and agencies, most notably the Jackson County Roads Division, which advised ODOT that Buncom was an important point of reference for travel in the county.

With that, and other supporting documentation like the Southern Oregon Historical Society's driving tour brochure and newspaper references to Buncom during such events as the Squire Fire and President Bush's visit, we were notified that Buncom would be included.

Many historical Oregon maps show Buncom promi-

nently, and the Rand McNally Oregon highway map showed Buncom as recently as 10 years ago.



At top is part of the cover of the 2005-2007 Official State Map. The bottom shows the portion of the map that includes Buncom.

LIVING ON THE KLEINHAMMER RANCH

(PART 2)

In the August 2005 issue, we began the story of Emily Savage, who lived on the Kleinhammer Ranch, which once extended from Buncom all the way up to the six-mile marker of Little Applegate Road. Emily and her husband, John, were caretakers on the ranch and became life-long friends of Glen and Vieva Saltmarsh. Mrs. Savage now lives on a ranch near Montague, Calif.

By Priscilla Weaver

There apparently was ample edible wildlife near Buncom in the 1930s. The Savages frequently caught trout out of the Little Applegate for supper. Emily also had her great grandfather's Smith & Wesson pistol and describes herself as a "natural shot." There was a steep canyon right across the road, which at that time ran between the huge tree that is still in the Salants' front yard and the old house, which sat right where the current house is sited. Emily could sit on the left bank of the canyon and "get quail with one shot."

After nine months on the Kleinhammer Ranch, Emily and John bought their own place, a dairy farm, on what is now Highway 238 seven miles this side of Murphy. They milked mostly Guernseys, with "one mean Brown Swiss" thrown in for good measure. Fred and Ethel West's boys also worked on the ranch. Because of the distance from the Little Applegate area, the Savages' social life gravitated towards Murphy and Grants Pass. Nonetheless, Glen and Vieva remained their best friends. Vieva and Emily spoke often by phone, they sent letters, and they visited back and

forth. Neither distance nor the scarcity of gasoline during the war deterred them. In fact, Emily corresponded for years with Vieva even after Emily and John moved away from the Rogue Valley.

During the Second World War, both John and Emily worked for Weyerhaeuser in Longview, Washington, on the Columbia River. John's skills were so valuable, and wood was so essential to the war effort, that Weyerhaeuser "would not turn him loose to go to war." Emily worked as a telephone operator for Weyerhaeuser. There were four

It's Membership Renewal Time

It's time to renew memberships for 2006. The cost remains only \$5 per family. Please see the renewal form on Page 5.

watchtowers to guard the lumber (this was post-Pearl Harbor) and the men manning the watchtowers regularly reported to Emily that "all is well."

When Emily and John returned to Oregon after the war, John worked for Weyerhaeuser, Crown Zellerbach, and other timber companies. One time in the late 1950s, John was working as a tree feller and got a job up at Soda Springs. He took Emily and Mary Lea along and they camped out. After John left for work one morning, Emily was cooking a tasty roast on a spit when a bear walked up to help himself. Emily,

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LIVING ON THE KLEINHAMMER RANCH

(From Page 2)

who can't be more than about 4-foot-10, faced him down, declaring loudly that it was her roast and the bear could just keep his hands off. He did, and retreated. But that wasn't Emily's only bear conquest. At a time when they were living on the Klamath River, a "tourist" came knocking on the door while John was at work in a mill. The tourist reported a bear taking pears out of a nearby tree. Emily got her rifle and shot and killed the bear while the tourist (foolishly) stood right beside her watching in awe. John had cautioned Emily, if she were face to face with a bear, to "keep shooting until he quits moving," and that's just what she did. She told us with a grin that there were too many holes in the hide for a bear rug. She heaved that bear carcass into a wheelbarrow and she and the tourist hung it over a garage door, no muss, no fuss. They ate the bear, and Emily remembers the meat having a sweet rich taste. She prepared it by frying it with a light coating of seasoned flour and recommends this method to any would-be bear-eaters. Perhaps her recipe should become the official covered dish of the Buncom Historical Society!

As for life after Oregon, today Emily and her daughter Mary Lea, son-in-law Dave Lemos, their three sons and their families all live near Montague, where they run a family cattle operation on several thousand acres. They occasionally come back to this area to visit with members of the West family. Emily remains active in the Siskiyou Chapter of the DAR, where she has served for many years

as Registrar. In 2004, the California State Society of the National Society of DAR gave her an award for Exemplary Service as Chapter Register. For her 80th birthday, Emily was given a seat in the DAR headquarters auditorium — Constitutional Hall — in Washington, D.C. In fact, the quiz show "Jeopardy" once was filmed in that hall but we don't know whether anyone sat in the seat marked with a brass plaque, "Emily Savage." Earlier, Siskiyou County honored her in 1995 by naming her "Distinguished Siskiyou County Woman" for her "significant contribution to advancing the awareness of women's history."

We're hoping to persuade Emily and her family to come back for Buncom Day next spring. We know you'll all enjoy them and enjoy learning a lot about the history of the Buncom neighborhood from this remarkable family.

Prominent Buncomite Fred Straube Dies

Fred Straube, a life-long resident of the Applegate, died Nov. 1.

He spent 40 years ranching, and was president of the Jackson County Cattle Association, associate board member of the Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District, and a State of Oregon Livestock Brand Inspector.

Fred is survived by his wife, Martha; daughters Audra Feedback, Debbie McGuire and Sue Snively; son Steve; and brother Robert. His mother, Louetta (West) Straube, died a few days after Fred. Also surviving is Louetta's husband and Fred's father, Louis.

"I HATE New Year's Eve!"

By Connie Fowler

I realize that that is pretty strong language, but it's true so I might as well say it. It seems to me to be a rather dumb sort of holiday. Another new year. So what? Evidently people get bored after a perfectly reasonable holiday like Christmas and so created a reason to party.

Think about it. Usually reasonable adults get dressed up, go out to purposely eat and drink too much, put on silly hats and make an unusual amount of racket cheering and hollering and singing some foreign song with words no one really understands. Well do you? Understand Auld Lang Syne?

And the kissing. A peck on the cheek is fine, but getting smooched by a drunk is sure no way to celebrate if you ask me. Celebrate what? The New Year? Big deal. The new year is a fact and no amount of celebrating is going to alter the fact that we'll be another year older, so will your car and your dog.

And the resolutions. Who ever knew anyone that kept one. "I resolve to lose twenty pounds," they say as they stuff on another five at the New Years party. My theory is that making all those promises to yourself only leads to depression which often leads to overeating which only leads to not keeping the resolution

"Boy is she cynical," you say. Maybe so, I don't know exactly why. As a kid I always had to babysit on New Years Eve while everyone else went out and celebrated. Maybe I'm jealous. Naw. When I am forced to attend a N.Y.E. party, I always insist we leave at 11:45. That way I avoid all that spit swapping. My husband obliges, merely tolerating my indignance. Once, a few years back we attended one of those parties. Before I

went I purchased a surgical mask and painted big red lips on it. Just prior to the big 12:00 I slipped it on. It received more than a few chuckles and made my participation in the uncouth event a bit more bearable, as well as germ free.

That masking will probably elicit the only snicker produced by this piece of writing which was originally intended to be an although slightly sarcastic, somewhat humorous endeavor.

Writing one's thoughts down on paper can be freeing, therapeutic, giving the writer a chance to see truth and deal with it. Often, after seeing the words on paper, the author can see that his bottled-up thoughts and emotions are out in the open. That they are nothing but something warped from childhood.

Perhaps at some New Years bash, when I was but a child, some normally caring, but slightly inebriated, person blew one of those typical New Years things you blow and it goes out, into my ear. Or some well-meaning person left lipstick marks all over my baby bald head, or someone sang and rocked me to Auld Lang Seine until I screamed out to be rescued. Or, worst of all, someone may have put one of those ridiculous hats on me, the tight elastic under my chin, making me feel trapped.

There, now I see. It's here in black and white. I am feeling such relief, having reckoned with this monster which has possessed me for these many years. What freedom. What peace. What a crock. I still hate New Years Eve. It's still dumb and it's still barbaric and it's, luckily, still only once a year. Even if I do find out that my mother made me be the baby New Year at a party forty-some years ago, it won't help.

(Continued on Page 6)

It's Membership Renewal Time

BUNCOM HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP DUES

Here are my/our membership dues for 2006. Enclosed is \$5.00 for an individual or family. Here is my/our name as we would like it to appear on the mailing list:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Comments: _____

Mail to: Buncom Hist. Society, 3232 Little Applegate Road, Jacksonville, OR 97530

THANKS TO THESE NEW OR RENEWING MEMBERS

Bonnie Guokas, Depoe Bay, OR
Ken & Jo Anne Phillips, Jacksonville, OR
Steve & Priscilla Weaver, Jacksonville, OR
Leota Cantrall, Medford, OR

DIRECTORS

Reeve Hennion, President 899-7656
Lyn Hennion

J.B. Roberts, Secretary 899-1125
Carolyn Roberts, Treasurer

Ben Fowler 899-7805
Connie Fowler

The Buncom Historical Society is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving the buildings and history of the ghost town of Buncom, Oregon. Society address: 3232 Little Applegate Road, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

On the Internet:
www.buncom.org

To join the Society, send \$5.00 with your name and address to the Society at 3232 Little Applegate Road, Jacksonville, OR 97530.

New Years Eve

(from Page 4)

I guess I'll just keep that mask with the lips on it and try to look up the meaning of Auld Lang Sign and better yet, maybe I'll get the flu and can stay home and watch thousands of usually reasonable people on T.V. turn into a sea of screaming, smooching, singing-off-key New Years Eve's.

Either way I am doomed. New Years Eve is as inevitable as the New Year's arrival. I guess I could resolve not to take it seriously, go with the flow, don't worry, be happy. Nah. Just like all resolutions were made to be broken, so this one too will fail and I will still hate New Years Eve.

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